

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 L-02 EB-07 OFA-01 SCA-01 SCSE-00

H-02 INR-07 DLOS-05 PRS-01 CG-00 DOTE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 INRE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

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DRAFTED BY ARA/PAF:BBELL:JZ

APPROVED BY ARA/PAF:BBELL

ARA/EP:JKING (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCSO

UNCLAS STATE 053575

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EC

SUBJECT: PRESS EXCHANGE ON TUNA BOAT SEIZURES

THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE CONCERNING TUNA BOAT SEIZURES TOOK PLACE AT THE MARCH 10 NOON BRIEFING AT THE DEPARTMENT WITH ROBERT FUNSETH THE SPOKESMAN:

Q: GOVERNOR REAGAN HAS STATED THAT, IN HIS VERY STRONG CONVICTION, AMERICAN CITIZENS SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO THE PROTECTION OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY ON THE HIGH SEAS VIS-A-VIS ECUADOREAN SEIZURE OF 139 TUNA BOATS. IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WE ARE NOT ONLY GIVING MILLIONS IN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID BUT WE'RE ALSO PAYING MILLIONS IN REGARD TO WHAT APPROXIMATES RANSOM. NOW, DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT FEEL THAT GOVERNOR REAGAN IS WRONG OR NOT?

A: WELL, I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE STATEMENT.

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Q- IT WAS ON PAGE 1 OF THE WASHINGTON POST THIS MORNING,  
SIR.

A: I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE STATEMENT BY GOVERNOR --

Q: YOU DON'T READ THE WASHINGTON POST OR WHAT?

A: REVEREND KINSOLVING, I READ THE WASHINGTON POST AND I  
READ OTHER NEWSPAPERS. BUT WHAT I WAS TRYING TO SAY,

BEFORE YOU INTERRUPTED ME, WAS THAT I HAD NOT SEEN THE  
STATEMENT OF GOVERNOR REAGAN.

Q: OH, I SEE.

A: NOW, AS FAR AS THE SUBSTANCE OF YOUR QUESTION,  
REVEREND, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE IN  
THIS SITUATION WOULD BE APPROPRIATE OR EFFECTIVE.

Q: WELL, FORCE BY WHO?

A: WE ARE DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF  
ECUADOR, AND WE HOPE TO FIND A SOLUTION BY DIPLOMATIC  
MEANS.

Q: COULD I FOLLOW THAT UP, PLEASE? AS I UNDERSTAND,  
THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR 23 YEARS AND WE'VE LOST 139  
FISHING BOATS AND THAT THE AMERICAN TUNA BOAT ASSOCIATION  
HAS BEEN PROTESTING FOR ALMOST A DECADE. HOW LONG, IN  
YOUR ESTIMATION, DO YOU THINK THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS  
GOING TO KEEP DISCUSSING THIS?

A: WELL, IT ISN'T A QUESTION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT;  
IT'S A QUESTION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

Q: WELL, AREN'T YOU PART OF IT?

A: AND NO ONE HAS MINIMIZED HOW DIFFICULT THIS PROBLEM  
IS, AND WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE  
WAY WOULD BE TO FIND A SOLUTION BY DIPLOMATIC MEANS. INGERSOLL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** SHIP DETENTION, PRESS CONFERENCES, FISHING BOATS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 10 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ORIGIN ARA  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 2  
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**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 JUN 2003 by BrownAM>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2004 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESS EXCHANGE ON TUNA BOAT SEIZURES THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE CONCERNING TUNA BOAT SEIZURES TOOK  
**TAGS:** PFOR, EFIS, PLOS, EC, US  
**To:** ALL POSTS USCINCSO  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006